

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with George Macdonald on 02-08-2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims (line numbers per the claim listing presented in the amendment dated 11-30-2006):

Claim 26, line 1, after ":" insert new paragraph --the mailbox defining an interior for receiving mail--;

Claim 26, line 5, after "divider" insert --positioned in the interior of the mailbox--;

Claim 26, line 6, delete "physical";

Claim 26, line 7, after "turned" insert --in the keyed start switch--;

Claim 26, line 8, change "the" to --a--;

Claim 26, line 9, delete "physical";

Claim 34, line 1, change "decontaminating device" to --mailbox--;

Claim 34, line 6, after "divider" insert --positioned in the interior of the decontamination chamber--;

Claim 34, line 7, delete "physical";

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Claim 34, line 8, after “turned” insert --in the keyed start switch--;

Claim 34, line 9, change “the” to --a--;

Claim 34, line 10, delete “physical”;

Claim 40, line 1, change "decontaminating device" to --mailbox--;

Claim 40, line 5, change “sanitization” to --decontamination--;

Claim 41, line 4, change “sanitization” to --decontamination--;

Claim 42, line 1, after “:” insert new paragraph --the mailbox defining an interior for receiving mail--;

Claim 42, line 7, after first recitation of "divider" insert --positioned in the interior of the mailbox-- and after “mail” insert --and--;

Claim 42, line 9, before "start" insert --keyed-- and after "and" insert --switched to start when a key is inserted and turned in the keyed start switch and--; and

Claim 42, line 10, before “.” insert --and to restrict decontamination start signal generation to a mail carrier possessing the key--.

2. The following is an examiner’s statement of reasons for allowance: The applicant’s arguments presented in section VII (A) of the brief regarding the previous 112-1 rejection are persuasive. The applicant’s arguments presented in section VII (B) of the brief regarding claim 26 and the previous 103 rejection of Webb in view of Lee are persuasive.

3. Regarding claim 26, the prior art of record fails to show or suggest the mailbox as claimed in detail, specifically the mailbox including a keyed start switch that is engaged and switched to start when a key is inserted and turned in the keyed start switch and that is used to

send a decontamination start signal to the decontamination system and to restrict decontamination start signal generation to a mail carrier possessing the key. While keyed start switches are well known, such as those for automobile ignitions, the use of a keyed start switch in conjunction with a decontamination mailbox wherein decontamination start signal generation is restricted to a mail carrier possessing the key is unobvious. Claims 34 and 42 include the above allowable subject matter and are therefore allowable for at least the same reason(s).

4. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William L. Miller whose telephone number is (571) 272-7068. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Victor Batson can be reached on (571) 272-6987. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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/William L. Miller/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3677